

Message Text

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R 061430Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5861

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMCONSUL GOTEBORG

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 5520

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SW, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET PROFESSOR REQUESTS ASYLUM IN SWEDEN, SENDS
OPEN LETTER TO BREZHNEV

1. IN AN OPEN LETTER TO SECRETARY GENERAL BREZHNEV
PUBLISHED OCTOBER 5 IN STOCKHOLM DAILY EXPRESSEN (AND
REPORTEDLY IN LE MONDE AND THE TIMES), 84-YEAR OLD
PROFESSOR ERNST KOLMAN RENOUNCED HIS MEMBERSHIP IN
THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY AND ATTACKED THE
INCREASING ISOLATION OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT FROM
ITS PEOPLE, CALLING IT "ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST
CONSERVATIVE REGIMES."

2. KOLMAN'S LETTER IS A RATHER LENGTHY ATTACK ON
THE "DEGENERATION" OF SOVIET POWER, THE CORRUPTION
OF THE RULING ELITE, AND PERVERSION OF IDEALS.
KOLMAN, A MEMBER OF THE PARTY FOR 58 YEARS, A FORMER
PRISONER UNDER STALIN, AND A PARTICIPANT IN THE
REVOLUTION WHO SAYS HE KNEW LENIN, ALSO CONDEMNS
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THE REGIME FOR SUPPRESSING BASIC RIGHTS AND FOR

ECONOMIC MISMANAGEMENT, ASKING, "CAN ONE REALLY PASS OVER ALL THESE FACTS WITH SILENCE AND AVOID DRAWING CONCLUSIONS?"

3. HE SAYS HE DOES NOT INTEND TO DENY SOVIET PROGRESS IN ELIMINATING ILLITERACY, IN FURTHERING EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE, AND IN IMPROVING THE HOUSING CONDITIONS FOR MANY OF THE PEOPLE. HOWEVER, KOLMAN CONCLUDES, "WE ARE BACK AS IN STALIN'S TIME... WE DON'T TRUST EACH OTHER, WE WRITE VACUOUS LETTERS OUT OF FEAR OF CENSORSHIP, AND WE BREAK RELATIONS WITH OUR FRIENDS...IS IT NOT INHUMAN ... TO PREVENT FAMILIES FROM REUNITING, TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM TRAVELLING ABROAD TO SEE THEIR FAMILIES....I CANNOT LIVE SO ANY LONGER."

4. KOLMAN IDENTIFIES HIMSELF AS A FORMER PARTY WORKER, MEMBER OF THE SCIENTIFIC ACADEMY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND PROFESSOR AT THE MOSCOW AND PRAGUE UNIVERSITIES, WHO HAS LIVED IN RETIREMENT IN MOSCOW SINCE 1963. HE AND HIS WIFE ARRIVED IN SWEDEN SEVERAL WEEKS AGO AFTER SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAD OVER A FOUR-YEAR PERIOD REFUSED FIFTEEN PRIOR REQUESTS THAT THEY BE ALLOWED TO VISIT THEIR DAUGHTER, WHO LIVES IN SWEDEN WITH HER FAMILY.

5. ACCORDING TO EXPRESSEN, FOLLOWING THE APPEARANCE OF HIS LETTER, KOLMAN WILL APPLY FOR ASYLUM IN SWEDEN SO HE AND HIS WIFE CAN REMAIN WITH THEIR DAUGHTER'S FAMILY. THERE IS NO REASON TO BELIEVE HIS REQUEST WILL BE REFUSED. THE PAPER ADDED THAT THE PROMINENT PICTURE OF AN 84-YEAR OLD MAN, FORCED TO WAIT FOUR YEARS TO VISIT HIS DAUGHTER AND FINALLY MOVED TO RENOUNCE A LIFE-LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY, WILL HARDLY BENEFIT THE SOVIET IMAGE IN SWEDEN.
SMITH

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